

Questions & Answers

April 2020



North
Cross
School

Q: Could you introduce some basic information about the Roanoke area and North Cross?

A: We are located in Southwestern Virginia, in between the Appalachian and Blue Ridge Mountain ranges. Roanoke, Virginia is clean, safe, and a well-established and vibrant city that is welcoming and growing because it has a forward thinking and strong business community, anchored in healthcare and research, and close to major centers of learning. We experience all four seasons, without any one of those seasons making it too hot or too cold to enjoy. Our springs with so much in bloom are beautiful, our falls with leaves turning many colors are stunning. Summer gets hot sometimes, but is not oppressive, and winter will have a snow or two, but sunny days bring smiles to our faces. Click here for a link to our comprehensive prospective family package.

Q: Can you share photos of student's activities, learning programs, dormitory and facility?

A: Here are some images you might enjoy:

Now@North Cross: <https://www.northcross.org/nownorthcross.html>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFX62HWy9pb5p0Pxh6TjKw>

Interviews with international students: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6A1xzevBac>

Our School Renovations: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UuplSN00MCM>

Dorm Life: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lCulxnyWPzg>

Upper School Curriculum explained by teachers:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PL6smtDUqsdrjQzv-XIPCKMdHjzgTlzTZN&v=T-LuzR9DY0&feature=emb_title

Dorm Social Media: https://www.instagram.com/wilson_boarding/

Q: What makes your school stand apart to attract international students?

A: The combination of many factors make North Cross attractive to international students. Academically, North Cross delivers an excellent college preparatory experience because we have excellent faculty, selective admission, and a rigorous curriculum – over 90% of our faculty have advanced degrees. Colleges and universities respect the North Cross name and our college acceptances reflect this. We are competitively priced, respected by colleges and universities, and provide each student a tailored and well-rounded experience.

When it comes to helping students with college selection, college application, college essays, and college decisions, we have a dedicated 28-year veteran college counselor whose sole responsibility is her college counseling. Julie Aavatsmark has worked at North Cross for over 13 years; prior to that she spent 15 years on the college side of this process, so she knows what colleges are looking for and has significant connections.

In addition to academics and college preparation, our students enjoy and benefit from participation in activities outside the classroom, where they can explore new things and develop relationships with other North Cross students. Whether it is to travel to Harvard and participate in Model United Nations, join the team and go to a coding competition in Washington, D. C., be on a bus trip to play sports against another school, or to take a role in our dramatic performance or musical, there are many enriching ways to make the most out of your time in the United States as part of our School. Our happiest students are those who participate.

International students also like North Cross because we are an inclusive community. We enjoy and welcome differing perspectives, and celebrate what makes each of us unique. We believe that a community that is more representative of the world at large helps prepare all of our students to make positive and thoughtful contributions to their communities when they leave. With two campuses in Shanghai, China, our students are able to exchange ideas with their counterparts on another continent.

Q: Who will be the “right fit” students for North Cross?

A: The international students who are best fit for North Cross are:

- Those focused on attending a college or university in the United States upon graduating from North Cross.
- Very comfortable with speaking, listening, reading and writing using the English language.
- Are interested in participating outside the classroom in sports, theater, clubs, and other activities with other students – they are also the happiest students we have.
- Students that want individualized attention from faculty and staff.

Q: How has the school supported international students?

A: The biggest support we can give a student is to start their time with us by making them feel welcome and assuring them that when they need us (faculty and administration) we are here for them. Our faculty and staff make themselves available before, after, and during the school day and in the evenings. In addition, international students have direct access to our Director of International Operations, Ms. Nicki Dabney, and, Dean of Student Life, Ms. Leigh Ann Hamlin. Finally, the Director of the Upper School is a valuable resource for all international students and their families.

Q: What is the ratio of students to teachers?

A: We have an 8:1 student teacher ratio. In a typical classroom, we have an average of 13 students in the Upper School, overall, with no class having more than 18 students.

Q: How many students are there in your school?

A: The Upper School typically has between 185 and 195 total students, and, on average, we have 20-25 international students in that population. Our goal is to increase the number of international students to 40, with a very diverse, multi-national student body.

Q: How much is the international student deposit?

A: Our International student deposit is \$1,000.

Q: Can you share more information about the refund policy if a student fails to get a visa?

A: We will issue a full refund of the tuition amount paid if a student fails to obtain a visa; however, the initial deposit is non-refundable.

Q: What is your tuition and fees payment plan? Are there any differences between payment for the entire year or half year or quarterly?

A: Most of our students pay their tuition in full, before school begins. We do make exceptions in special cases to pay tuition in two installments. Fees for individual student’s purchases such as books, labs, AP testing, lunch, and snacks, are billed to the student’s account and paid monthly.

Q: How many AP Classes does your school offer?

A: We offer 19 AP courses that include the following: Biology, Calculus AB and BC, Chemistry, Comparative Government and Politics, Computer Science A, Computer Science Principles, English Language and Composition, English Literature, French Language and Culture, Human Geography, Latin, Physics 1, Spanish Language and Culture, Spanish Literature, Statistics, Studio Art-Drawing, United States History, and World History. The College Board charges students a fee that will be directly billed to student’s accounts. Currently, the fee is \$95 (US) per exam.

Q: How many boarding students live in one room and can students choose rooms as well as roommates in the dormitory?

A: Our student rooms are very different from what you might see at other schools. Each room is set up like an apartment, with a living/study room, bedroom, and an en suite bathroom. No more running down the hall to shower! Typically there are 2 students to a room. Rooms are assigned based on age and it is our goal to increase the multicultural experience(s) by pairing students with people who will give them a more well-rounded living experience. We are flexible, however, to make adjustments as needed.

Q: Does the student have time to arrange and get used to their new life at North Cross? Tell us about your orientation program?

A: All International students attend an international student orientation meeting and receive a packet of important and helpful information. New students will also attend our New Student orientation session with our new domestic day students. In our orientation, we introduce new students to North Cross School and its culture, expectations, and our key people they will need to know. We talk about our local and regional culture and laws, new experiences they will have, and we emphasize 'need to know' administrative procedures (i.e. I-20 and maintaining full-time status).

Q: If students have problems in academic, social or dormitory life, who can help them and how to contact these people?

A: The dormitory staff are able to be in close contact with parents and agents about the progress of their students. Our 'on dorm' community is relatively small so we are able to provide a customized plan for any students that are experiencing academic difficulties. For example, we have used supervised evening study halls and limitations of electronics at night with some of our students that need help focusing. There is a constant communication between the Dean of Student Life and dorm staff that helps to ensure student success from a social perspective.

Q: What is a typical study plan for international students? Can students have tutoring programs to help when they need additional assistance?

A: Upper School students typically work on their own through scheduled study hall time. Most students will have evening school work and will learn to manage their time to complete their assignments. Faculty are available during the day and are available, when arranged in advance, to address student questions at other times during the day and sometimes in the evenings. The Director of the Upper School is an excellent resource to help manage academic workloads. On occasion, a tutor may be recommended to help ensure the success of one of our students. There would be an additional fee associated with tutoring services.

Q: Which subjects can students choose or what electives are available?

A: Students work through the Director of the Upper School and choose their courses for each academic year by electing first, second, and third choices from a combination of required courses needed to graduate and electives that interest them. In addition, each student is assigned a specific advisor that continually monitors academic progress, communicates with parents or guardians, and is strictly an advocate for their advisee.

Q: Living in the dormitory, do students need to go shopping or do they have to buy anything else for school?

A: They do not need to shop for anything other than personal items (such as grooming and hygiene supplies); however, shopping and restaurants are convenient to the dormitory. We do communicate specific things they will need for school before the fall trimester begins.

Q: Are students required to bring electronic devices, such as laptops or Chromebooks to your school?

A: Yes, students must bring their own laptops. It is up to the student's preference based on which operating system (OS) they are most comfortable with. Apple or Microsoft or Chrome. If Apple, go with Apple; if Microsoft, go with Dell, and if Chrome, either Acer or Google are good choices, but it is truly up to student/family preferences and budgets.

Q: In case students have some health problems, can they prepare and bring some medicine home to use?

A: Yes. They will inform the school and the dormitory staff and provide parent instructions on the medicines they bring.

Q: Does the school have entrance health examinations?

A: Currently we do not require this. Going forward, we may, but at this time, we do not. To compete in athletics, an important part of the North Cross community, students will undergo a sports physical, which we will coordinate, before they are able to join the team.

Q: During their study, if students get sick, how can they get help?

A: At school, we have a registered nurse (RN) on staff each day during school hours. While at the dorm, dorm staff is available and medical care is convenient to the dorm. Staff are available around the clock, 24 hours a day, to help should students get sick and need it.

Q: What is your school's solution on the COVID-19 Pandemic? How have you educated your students about social distancing?

A: We have followed state and federal regulations and medical guidance during this time. Campus did close; however, without any interruption, we were able to launch synchronous and asynchronous learning to continue our academic year. All students have seamlessly transitioned to an online format to finish the academic year. Additionally, students have received, and are receiving, guidance from our school nurse on social distancing and other ways to stay safe, healthy, and to not spread or expose themselves to disease. Above all, our students' safety is most important.